

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 P.M.
EDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ROOM
ARNESON ACRES PARK
JANUARY 11, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Herring, Chuck Mooty, Tom White, David Fredlund, Karla Sitek, Andy Finsness, Floyd Grabel, George Klus, Linda Presthus, Bill Jenkins, John Murrin

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Todd Anderson

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Kojetin, Kay Wetherall, Rick Ites, John Towey, John Justice

I. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 14, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Floyd Grabel MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 14, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Dave Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. EDINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTATION AND MUSEUM TOUR - BOB KOJETIN

Mr. Keprios introduced Bob Kojetin, President of the Edina Historical Society. Mr. Kojetin then introduced Kay Wetherall, the executive secretary for the Edina Historical Society. Mr. Kojetin and Ms. Wetherall gave the Park Board a tour of the Edina Historical Society.

Mr. Kojetin explained that the City of Edina is 110 years old. He then noted that the Park Board is 70 years old and that the Park and Recreation Department is 45 years old. He pointed out that the Park Board was developed basically because they wanted to protect Minnehaha Creek because Minneapolis was moving up the creek and buying land. Therefore, the Park Board was formed to stop building along the creek except in the Country Club area. Mr. Kojetin indicated that the Park Board was an elected office until 1955 when Edina went into a city government and it became an appointed board.

Mr. Kojetin indicated that the Historical Society also has two other buildings they take care of, the Grange Hall and the Old Cahill School. He noted that there are 11 members on the Historical Society Board. He stated that at the Cahill School there are three part-time teachers who conduct 172 days of school each year. He noted that kids from all over the state come to the Old Cahill School. The program has been going on since 1971. He

noted that it costs \$150.00 per day for schools to come to Cahill School and that the teachers are paid \$80.00 a day.

Mr. Kojetin commented that last year their expenses were around \$31,000 and they took in \$33,000, so budget wise they came out good. He also explained that their one big fundraiser is a book sale that is held in October. Last year they raised approximately \$3,000 which was used to help operate the facility. Mr. Kojetin stated that the Historical Society is open to the public for a few hours on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Mr. Kojetin pointed out where the books are that contain all of the history of Edina. He noted that in the last year they have also started to do oral interviews of people who come in and give a history of past relatives, families, etc. This way when people are trying to find out about something they can sit down and listen to a tape. This is a fairly new project they have currently been working on.

Mr. Kojetin explained that he does have a concern. The facility needs to be maintained and taken care of and being a non-profit organization it is difficult to raise funds to maintain a building of its size. He indicated that from the beginning the Historical Society has always been under Park and Recreation and the city has always paid for the heat, light, electricity as well as a janitor to come in and clean the downstairs. However, there are starting to be more problems such as the ceiling is leaking, the outside exterior needs painting as well as a few other items. He noted that these are items that they look back to the city for funding. He also pointed out that Arneson Acres still needs a new entrance as well as a new sign. He commented that possibly the Garden Club and Historical Society can work together on these projects. However, he doesn't know that they will be able to raise money for work on the actual building.

Mr. Herring thanked Mr. Kojetin for his time and for making the facility available for the Park Board's meeting.

Mr. Keprios commented that we are very fortunate to have the Historical Society, we look at them like one of our Athletic Associations because they also provide a tremendous service with volunteer help. They are a very active, dedicated group that we are very fortunate to have.

III. BRAEMAR MEN'S CLUB PRESENTATION

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Braemar Men's Club asked to be put on the agenda because they would like to voice their concerns and views as well as inform the Park Board a about the Braemar Men's Club.

Rick Ites, last year's President of the Braemar Men's Club, stated that they are here to help give some insight on what makes Braemar Golf Course a nice place and not just from their perspective. He indicated that Braemar is self-supporting, however, they are concerned when expenditures and capital improvements go up that the process might be

impaired in the future. He explained that there are going to need to be some significant items added to the new golf course. Mr. Valliere has received a lot of negative feedback on this and has stated there are some capital items that have not yet been set in motion. Mr. Ites indicated that they would therefore like to hear some direction that the Park Board is going to take at the facility.

Mr. Towey explained that the basis of their concern lies in the fact that any good golf course needs to have a continuing program to keep itself at the level it wishes to be. He noted they are concerned that the Park Board has decided that some of the capital expenditures that have been requested are not going to be considered. Therefore, they want to know if that is a sign of what they are looking at down the road. Will funds that are generated by the course going to always be put back into the golf course. He pointed out that approximately 40 years ago one of the most prominent golf courses in the United States was owned by the City of Minneapolis. It was self-sustaining and had a program of regenerating income back into the course each year. However, sometime around 1960 much of the money that was generated started going into the general fund and not back into the golf course. He indicated that in 1997 they did start to put a large scale of money back into the golf courses. He noted that all went back to a decision that was made 40 years ago when the money looked so good that they put it into the general fund, therefore, the courses dipped so dramatically that they are not even a shadow of what they once were. He explained that is an indication of how fast things can go if we are not able to sustain the golf course. Mr. Towey stated that golf courses go in one of two directions, they either go forwards or backwards, they do not stay the same.

Mr. Justice indicated that he is an Edina resident and does play a lot of golf at Braemar. He stated that there are a lot of golf courses out there and Braemar is competing for the golfer like everyone else. He noted that he would like to see improvements continue to be made, the course cannot stand still.

Mr. Keprios indicated that one of the main reasons why some of the improvements that were talked about aren't being done immediately is because the golf course first needs to pay back its debt due to overspending on the development of the new nine. The golf course has done very well financially and has been able to cover its bonded indebtedness and operational expenses, as well as still have some money left over. Mr. Keprios stated that all of Braemar's cash deficit should be paid off before anything more is built. He noted that was a staff decision and not the Park Board's.

Mr. Herring indicated that Mr. Valliere and his staff do an outstanding job, they're very focused on costs and make sure that they get the most out of their investments and capital spending with respect to the golf course. He noted that he feels even with the changes in fees Braemar is still right down the middle given the quality of the golf course compared to other area golf courses. Mr. Herring stated that he has played a lot of golf at Braemar and he hears the concern that is being made. However, at this point he feels they are making the necessary capital investments with respect to the equipment and facilities at Braemar. He noted that he personally is not willing to commit that we would never want

to take excess funds from our golf courses and use them for other purposes. He stated that his number one commitment, with respect to the income that is received from the golf courses, is to make sure that we are making an adequate reinvestment to maintain the high level of quality that we currently enjoy.

Mr. Herring stated that right now Park and Recreation is very capital constrained. This is an issue throughout the whole system right now and is something that staff and the Park Board are currently working on. Mr. Herring commented that his feeling is the golf course is in good shape for the upcoming season. He noted he thinks that is what he is hearing from the Braemar Men's Club, the concern is where are we going in the future. Mr. Herring indicated that Mr. Keprios is very good at keeping his staff informed and therefore if anything comes up Mr. Valliere will be made aware of it. He informed the Braemar Men's Club that if there are any issues that come up he would like to hear from them. He again noted that Braemar Golf Course is a very valued resource and we are going to continue to maintain it.

IV. CITY/SCHOOL REFERENDUM

Mr. Keprios indicated that there was some very good discussion at the joint meeting with the Park Board and City Council and one of the subjects that came up was the proposed referendum. He noted that he and Mr. Mooty have tried to keep the Park Board informed on what has been happening in the process. He explained that the Park Board really hasn't been engaged on the development as far as input from the start. Therefore, it might be a little premature to ask the Park Board to just outwardly endorse the whole thing at this point because it is still taking shape. Mr. Keprios explained that currently the architects are discussing what all of the possibilities are.

Mr. Klus stated that he heard that right now with everything added up there are 25 million dollars worth of improvements. He asked how much of that has come from Park and Recreation. Mr. Mooty commented that the most recent number has been 15 million dollars and noted that he would like to try to give a little bit of perspective as to how it has gotten to this point. He explained that it basically started because the seating at the football stadium was being condemned and there was a group that was asked to be put together to look at the possibility of really enhancing that whole football stadium. People from the school district, school board, park board and some residents were asked to be part of this process and so for a couple meetings there was simply discussion on what potential improvements and enhancements would be appropriate for the football stadium as well as what seemed to be feasible.

Mr. Herring noted that he thought this actually went back to some of the earlier discussions regarding the senior center/community center at the Kunz Lewis site. Mr. Mooty indicated that the issue to begin with was simply the football stadium at the community center. He then explained that he has been a major proponent in trying to get some additional gyms at the community center that he stuck his foot out to some degree and asked to look at the possibility of having the gymnasium concept be added on to the

whole football stadium concept and therefore that was added. Not only were they looking at adding new gymnasiums but were also looking at refurbishing some of the gyms at South View Middle School and the community center. At that time other components were being added such as having a new baseball facility, upgrading the theatre, etc. and therefore it continued to gain momentum and as items were added the cost continued to grow as well. Mr. Mooty commented that it is still being defined as far as what is being done. The experts have been brought in to put together proposals as far as the enhancements. Mr. Mooty indicated that he feels copies of the proposal need to be given to the Park Board because it doesn't do justice to try to explain it without everyone having a chance to read it.

Mr. Mooty pointed out that now what has happened is other groups are wanting to get into this as well. One group wants to find a way to enhance the pools and another group wants to find a way to figure out enhancements at other public facilities and parks. It has really snowballed and we are to a point where anybody who has an interest in trying to do something is trying to see what potentially can be tossed in the ring. Mr. Mooty stated that none of the items are inappropriate or unjustified it's just that it has created its own direction based upon the momentum right now. Therefore, that is why the Park Board and the City to a large degree haven't been the ones dictating what all has been done because it really started out as a school issue. However, once it looked like it was going to become a bond issue we started to look at some of these things on school property and avoid some of the additional investment of having to acquire property. This way we would be able to utilize a lot of things that are already on school property from an infrastructure standpoint. Also, the economics of trying to do it within a school arrangement made the most sense as far as trying to pull this together. The schools do not want to add more costs because from their standpoint they have decent capacity with the gymnasiums and what not. Those are needs for park and recreation and after school programs. Therefore, the City has had to step in to be viewed as being a major player in this if it's to get off the ground. Mr. Mooty also pointed out there are geographic issues as far as what can actually fit on that space because there are limitations as to what can be done.

Mr. Klus noted that it seemed to him at the meeting with the City Council last week that the city is still opening the doors to new proposals and ideas. However, at the same time it sounds like everyone is still pushing for a May referendum and he doesn't know how that is going to work.

Mr. Mooty indicated that his concern is this project will take approximately three years to complete. Therefore, if something is not approved by May we will lose another year of utilization. Mr. Klus commented that the City is saying they want to get this done by May, therefore, do we still have time as a Park Board to give them input if they want our input. Mr. Mooty replied that it seems to him that as a board we need to focus on what are our priorities as well as what would we like to see accomplished. Also, how does that list fall in line with the list that's in this proposal and the list of projects from Park and Recreation for 4 million. He noted that he thinks the City Council is just trying to get

some feedback from the Park Board to see if this all falls within our priorities. Is the project fulfilling the needs of the Park Board as to what should be done. He commented that some of the items aren't necessarily related to Park and Recreation, such as enhancements to the theatre, etc.

Mr. Herring asked Mr. Murrin what his sense is of the school's boards feeling about this and their priorities. Mr. Murrin commented that first of all Mr. Mooty has had a huge role in developing this, he did a lot to get people in the community interested in what we can do for the kids to deal with some of the overflow issues that we have. He noted that there is some very significant synergism from the school district's desire to get things going. The School Board, however, is looking at this as a really great opportunity and is pushing to see it done earlier rather than later. However, it's kind of out of the School Board's area but he knows that the superintendent and the City have been talking about the Kunz Lewis site for a long time. He noted that the school district owns the bus garage and that the City needs that property to help make everything work and so that also comes into play.

Mr. Keprios explained that the Kunz Lewis issue really did spark a lot of ideas and creative thinking. He indicated that at that time the City Council directed staff to follow-up on studies to show whether their ideas would work or not and one of the thoughts was to have a community center at the Kunz Lewis site. Therefore, every community center in the Twin Cities area was studied and his report pointed out how park and recreation is desperately in need of extra gym space. At that time, Mr. MacHolda was then sent off on a charge to study the gym situation and after his comprehensive study it was determined that we are a minimum of four gymnasiums short but ideally we could use an additional six gymnasiums. Mr. Keprios indicated that once there was talk of having a community center that is when the neighborhood groups and associations got on the band wagon and came up with a wonderful proposal. The proposal was to build an indoor football stadium with gymnasiums and a senior center and all the needs of Edina were going to be fulfilled within this one structure. Mr. Keprios indicated that after this he was then sent on a charge by the City Council to look into a public/private partnership that would accomplish the gymnasium aspect and still have a health club atmosphere. After that the Edina Swim Club came forward asking for a 50 meter indoor pool. Therefore, a study was done on 50 meter pools which showed that they cost a lot of money to operate and begged the question who is going to pay for that. Mr. Keprios stated that in all of this he thinks that staff really helped to identify what the true needs are versus the desires. There is definitely a need in Edina for gymnasiums, a better swimming facility and we are definitely short of field space. These are the key items. He commented that the auditorium, bleachers and a few other items are, in his view, primarily more school related issues.

Mr. Keprios explained that there are still some things that need to fall into place as we head down the road with this referendum. First of all, we need to figure out who is going to pay for the operational expenses and how are they going to be paid. Secondly, if there's going to be a charge how much is it going to be. Thirdly, who is going to control

the facility, will there be some kind of a joint powers agreement between the City and School District as far as access to it. He pointed out that park and recreation currently receives calls from the school district saying we can't use a gym at a particular time because something has come up. When this happens all of the coaches need to be notified so that they can inform their players. He stated that this has been an ongoing significant problem for years. He also noted that park and recreation programs cannot use the high school gymnasiums on Wednesday evenings because that is the night they clean the facility and it's those types of issues we constantly have to deal with. Therefore, we need to get something in writing if we are going into this joint venture.

Mr. Klus asked if what he is hearing is that the Park Board doesn't need to be concerned tonight about looking at items for the bond issue. There is still time to do this in the future and asked where are we at with this. Mr. Keprios replied that people need to be informed before they vote and if they are not, it's going to probably be a no vote. We need ample time to inform the public and answer their questions. His opinion is that right now to have a vote in May is going to be tough but it is possible. Mr. Herring commented that for the last referendum Mr. Jenkins attended all of the neighborhood meetings at each park and explained how it was going to be done and he feels that was critical to the success of the last referendum.

Ms. Presthus indicated that some of the facilities, such as the classrooms, are clearly school facilities and have nothing to do with the city. Therefore, isn't the city going to have a little problem voting on a referendum on things that aren't for them. Mr. Mooty responded that on that particular item the school will finish that space out of their own dollars.

Ms. Presthus commented that some of the concerns she has heard is whose money is this. Mr. Mooty replied that is going to be a big issue that both the City Council and School District have to try to figure out. He noted there is a split there but it's very confusing in trying to figure out where the split is. However, they feel very comfortable that the legal issue can be dealt with. It's going to be hard to figure out how to properly allocate it. Ms. Presthus stated that's where the concern is, as it keeps growing how many things can be put in it. Mr. Murrin indicated that if it's a school item there is money that they can allocate to it. He noted that as he understands it the city and school are pretty much in tune on this and they don't seem to have a conflict.

Mr. Murrin stated that if the school wants to add something and it's totally their program there are funds to pay for it. In fact there is state money for the stadium because it has been condemned. Mr. Herring stated that if there's money for the stadium then it's not in the referendum. Mr. Murrin noted there is money for just the bleachers, nothing else. It would still part of the referendum because there are other things that need to be done. Mr. White asked what is the time line on the bleachers, when do they have to be done. Mr. Mooty replied that it is his understanding that by the end of this calendar year a formal plan has to be in written form and approved by the state indicating that it's going to be done in a certain time period.

Mr. White indicated that he doesn't feel comfortable voting on this tonight to approve it and send it off to the City Council. He asked if it can be put off until the February Park Board meeting where Mr. Keprios can address the concerns that have been made, which are all valid and important. Mr. Mooty commented so that the Park Board is not the one holding up the process in addition to reviewing the proposal we should also be reviewing the proposals by staff as far as items they would like to see done if we were to have additional dollars put in. Therefore, we are looking at both issues at the same time so that at the February Park Board meeting we are looking at both sides of the picture. Ms. Presthus commented that we are already three months behind, don't we need to do it now or at least say we will be willing if crunch comes to crunch. Mr. Jenkins noted that it's not going to be done in May because there are still too many things up in the air. He stated that the key to this whole thing is educating the people and letting them know what's going on.

Mr. Klus indicated that he thought he heard Mayor Maetzold say the referendum has to go in May. Therefore, if the Park Board doesn't take action tonight is that going to be okay. Mr. Keprios replied that the school would like to shoot for May.

Mr. Murrin stated that his feeling is that by delaying this it is like a no vote. He stated that what he is hearing is May is a better time to have the referendum than in November for the general election. Mr. Jenkins commented that November is not a good time to do this. Mr. Murrin noted that there has been a lot of work done on this and sometimes time is of the essence. He pointed out that there has been talk about private funding behind this and he feels it's an opportunity whose time is here. Therefore, it would be nice if the Park Board could give its blessing in some way and at the next meeting we will be prepared with all of the information and what has been thought out by the professionals.

Mr. Mooty commented that if the pool issue comes into play and the Park Board elements come into play there is no way the referendum will take place in May because there are too many other dimensions that are going to need greater explanation. He noted that he believes if it is just the community center concept that is something that can easily be explained in a time period that could suffice. However, he doesn't think that is probably ideal, but it could suffice if it is just the community center concept. Mr. Mooty stated that his perspective is depending on what all is potentially added into it is what is really going to dictate the time frame that's going to be doable.

Mr. White again commented that he doesn't think the Park Board has enough information to vote on this tonight. He stated that he's okay giving his initial blessing that we will vote on it next month but is not quite sure what that will do.

Mr. Mooty commented that right now we don't even know what we are voting on. He stated that what he thinks the Park Board has control of is listing the priority of what we want money for. What are the needs and what is it going to cost to fulfill those needs. If we are comfortable with the listing that was put together by staff that could then be

proposed to the City Council as to what we think is relevant. He noted that he thinks this group is relatively knowledgeable on the proposals of improvements that have been put forth. However, are those ones that we think we should be asking for or do we think we should be asking for more. Mr. Mooty commented that is something he feels the Park Board can try to make a decision on.

Mr. Herring indicated that what he read in the staff report is that the City Council wants the Park Board to make a recommendation regarding the city/school referendum. Mr. Klus stated that what he thought the City Council was asking for was a recommendation from the Park Board on what they would like to see added to the referendum. Mr. Keprios commented that he understands the directive to be "Does the Park Board endorse or not endorse the referendum."

Mr. Herring commented that his problem is he's not sure what's in and what's not in as well as what is the City paying for and what is the School District paying for. Also, he's not sure what the joint use agreement is going to be. Mr. Herring also noted that there are a lot of things on the capital expenditure plan that he feels more strongly about than swimming pools. He noted that he can't just say yes, we want everything on our capital expenditure plan to be included in the referendum.

George Klus MOVED TO TABLE THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE REFERENDUM PROPOSAL UNTIL THE FEBRUARY PARK BOARD MEETING.

Mr. White indicated that he would like the Park Board members to receive a copy of the packet next week to read over the next few weeks and that way we will all be informed and ready to go at the February Park Board meeting. He noted that he doesn't want to delay the process but it can't be voted on tonight. Mr. Mooty replied that he also doesn't think we can vote tonight. However, when everyone looks at the proposal they also need to see if there are other things that should be added as well as list the priorities. He also noted that we still don't have anything on the pool so at this time we can't make any judgment on the pool.

Mr. Finsness noted that in the capital budget there is a lot of money going into the fields and indicated he would like to know how pressing it is for that to be done next year. Is it something that could wait another year.

Ms. Sitek indicated that her biggest concern is this agreement. Are we going to be able to deal with the school and will we have the information on the operating costs, etc., done by next month. Mr. Keprios replied that he honestly doesn't know, that's an important question. Mr. White commented that one of the things we can say to the City Council is we vote yes to go forward with this but only with these caveats and then list those.

Floyd Grabel SECONDED THE MOTION.

IN FAVOR: Chuck Mooty, Andy Herring, Tom White, Andy Finsness, Bill Jenkins, Karla Sitek, Linda Presthus, Floyd Grabiell, David Fredlund, George Klus

OPPOSED: John Murrin

V. MEMORIALS AND DONATIONS POLICY

Mr. Herring stated that with the lateness of the hour he would like to put the donations and memorial policy off until the next Park Board meeting.

VI. BRAEMAR PARK PATHWAY UPDATE

Mr. Herring indicated that he is satisfied with the staff report on the Braemar Park pathway update. Mr. Grabiell asked does he understand correctly that what is in white is currently there and what is noted in red is to be built at some point in the future. Mr. Keprios noted that the parts in red are by the Bloomington border and those areas we are struggling with as far as getting easements. However, we do have a new strategy in place and will be trying again. Ms. Presthus asked how long is the path to which Mr. Keprios replied he has asked the Engineering Department to put a wheel to it when it is completed. Right now it is approximately three miles.

VII. COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES REPORT - LINDA PRESTHUS

Ms. Presthus handed out a brochure and indicated that they have been working very hard on this program. They are not going to do it every year because it is such a big thing but it looks like it's going to be a good event.

Ms. Presthus indicated that they also have three web sites that they are using as a fundraiser which is on-line shopping. The kick back goes to the school and all you have to do is register with them. It's a great fundraiser for community education programs.

VIII. OTHER

A. Year 2000 Park Board Meeting Schedule - Mr. Herring reminded the Park Board members that the next meeting is on **Wednesday**, February 9th, at the Edina Art Center.

B. Asset Building Town Meeting Reminder (Tuesday, February 8th).- Mr. Herring indicated that this is a very important meeting and asked that everyone attend if possible.

C. Sale of Park Land (Fox Meadow Park) and Memorial Policy - Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios to take these two topics off of the February Park Board agenda. He indicated that he wants to have plenty of time to talk about the referendum. Mr. Klus asked Mr.

Keprios to also send out a map of where Fox Meadow Park is located so he is familiar with it.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chuck Mooty MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 P.M. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.